

To the Members of the California State Assembly:

I am returning Assembly Bill 2532 without my signature.

This bill would amend the existing Marine Life Management Act to authorize the Department of Fish and Game (Department) to prepare or review, and the Fish and Game Commission to adopt, fishery management framework plans.

This bill is flawed in that the concept of “co-management” is not fully developed and the definition within the bill is vague. The bill does not include any requirement for binding agreements between the parties, nor does it provide a clear division of responsibilities, costs, and implementation obligations. As such the bill actually impairs the ability of fishery stakeholders to fully participate in co-management.

The framework envisioned in this bill, while well-intended, lacks sufficient specificity to ensure successful outcomes that further our mutual goal of sustainable fisheries management for California. Nonetheless, the development of new fishery management tools is always welcome.

I have signed SB 1690 (Wiggins) which provides funding and direction for the Department and the Ocean Protection Council to work with stakeholders to create a task force and essentially develop a “co-management” framework for California’s crab fishery. I believe this presents a good opportunity to provide a pilot project and more fully develop both the concept and the practical application of a fishery co-management framework.

For these reasons, I am returning this bill without my signature.

Sincerely,

Arnold Schwarzenegger